days per year for the High Court; the Government of Maharashtra, Goa and Rajasthan have favoured increase in the number of annual working days of their respective High Courts; and the Government of Meghalaya has no objection to the increase in the number of the working days in the High Court. The process of consultation is continuing.

Legal Sanctity to Live-in Relationship

398. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Allahabad High Court recently, delivered a judgement giving legal sanctity for live-in relationship;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government on this judgement;

(c) whether it is not going to affect our institution of marriage and the emotional bond linked to it; and

(d) if so, what his Ministry is contemplating in this regard to save the institution of marriage in the country?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (d) In the case of Payal Katara *Vs.* Superintendent, Nari Niketan, Kalindri Vihar, Agra and others, the Allahabad High Court upholding the constitutional right of the citizens as enshrined in articles 19 and 21 of the Constitution of India held that the petitioner, a lady about 21 years of age-being a major, has right to go anywhere and that anyone-man and woman even without getting married can live together if they wish. The judgement has not commented against the institution of marriage or its sanctity.

Setting up of Sub-Bench of High Court Bench at Rajkot

399. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from Government of Gujarat to set up a Sub-Bench of High Court Bench at Rajkot, Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) (a) and (b) No, Sir. In fact Government of Gujarat

has requested for setting up a Bench of the High Court at Rajkot. The Chief Justice of the High Court has, however, opined that it would not be in the interest of the institution to have a Circuit Bench of the High Court at Rajkot.

Functioning of Fast Track Courts

400. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Fast Track Courts set up in the country as on 31st December, 2001, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Fast Track Courts that have been established are not running to the satisfaction of the people and Government;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken by Government to improve the functioning of the Fast Track Courts; and

(e) the number of cases pending before the Fast Track Courts, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) As per available information, as on 31.01.2002. 1015 Fast Track Courts have been set up throughout the country. A Statement showing the number of courts set up State-wise is placed at statement-I (*see* below).

(b) and (c) As per information available, the Scheme is running satisfactorily. The print and visual media have also been highlighting the Scheme. After the Scheme has come into force, 1015 courts have been set up. out of 64,290 cases transferred to Fast Track Courts 18,875 cases have already been disposed of.

(d) The Sub-ordinate judiciary including the Fast Track Courts is under the administrative control of the concerned High Court and the State Government. the shortcomings noticed, if any, are being looked into by them. Necessary clarifications, as and when sought by the State Governments/High Courts are also issued by the Central Government periodically on various aspects of the functioning of Fast Track Courts.

(e) Out of 64,290 cases which were transferred to these courts, 45,415 cases are pending in various States. As statement showing the number of cases transferred to, disposed and pending in the Fast Track Courts is placed as Statement-II.